

in a thoroughly creditable manner, and has thereby merited the thanks of thousands of bird students to whom her book will truly prove a 'boon.'—
J. A. A.

Brewster's 'Birds of the Cape Region of Lower California.'¹—The Cape Region of Lower California, as here defined, comprises the terminal portion of the peninsula "southward from the northern base of the mountains between La Paz on the Gulf shore and the town of Todos Santos on the Pacific Coast," and is a sharply defined faunal and floral area, characterized by peculiar climatic conditions which have left their impress upon the animal and plant life. It is a mountainous country, separated from the more northern part of the peninsula by a low desert tract which forms a formidable barrier to the extension of plant and animal life, either from the north southward or from the south northward. It has a rather humid climate, and is situated on the edge of the tropics, the Tropic of Cancer crossing the center of the region. Its area embraces about two degrees of latitude and one of longitude.

The basis of this excellent monograph consists of a collection of "upwards of 4,400 birds" made for the author by Mr. M. Abbott Frazar in 1887. An 'Introduction' of twelve pages is devoted largely to an itinerary of the trip, which describes in detail the localities where Mr. Frazar collected, and also defines the region and indicates its peculiar physical characteristics. The 'Systematic Notice of the Birds' occupies pages 13-219, and is followed by a bibliography, and a good index. Mr. Brewster regrets that there is so little to record respecting the life histories of the species, Mr. Frazar's field notes proving scanty, and other ornithologists who have visited the region seem to have been more intent on gathering and preparing specimens than on recording field observations. "The main portion of my paper," says the author, "treats only of birds which are definitely known to have occurred in the Cape Region, but in dealing with the distribution of such of these as are not confined to this area, I have consulted—and frequently cited, also—all the more important records that I could find relating to the central and upper parts of the Peninsula as well as to southern California, and in addition I have outlined, briefly, the general range of each species or subspecies along the Pacific coast, hoping thereby to show more clearly the precise relations in which the different forms stand geographically to the Cape fauna."

Acknowledgment is made to his assistant, Mr. Walter Deane, for the preparation of the bibliography, which includes some seventy titles, and for preparing the synonymy. He has performed the task, says Mr. Brewster, "with infinite care and faithfulness, verifying every citation by

¹ Birds of the Cape Region of Lower California. By William Brewster. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zoöl., Vol. XLI, No. 1. pp. 1-241, with Map. September, 1902.

direct examination of the original text. A fuller synonymy has been given for the thirty or more birds which appear to be either peculiar to the region under consideration or especially prominent members of the fauna. . . . The synonymy is intended to serve, at least primarily, merely as an index to what has been published on the characteristic birds of the Cape Region, and on the *local history* only of those which visit it during migration or in winter, or which breed but casually or very sparingly within its confines."

The number of species recorded for the region is 167, with 88 additional subspecies, or a total of 255 forms. Of these four are described as new, and 36 are recorded for the first time as occurring in the Cape Region. The new forms are: *Totanus melanoleucus frazari*, *Megascops xantusi*, *Bubo virginianus elachistus*, and *Tachycineta thalassina brachyptera*. The latter is mentioned as "an interesting illustration of the recognized fact that isolated, non-migratory birds are given to having shorter wings than those which regularly perform extended journeys." Mr. Brewster had previously described three new species and nine new subspecies from this same collection, which makes sixteen new forms characterized by him from the Cape Region, or one half of those recognized as peculiar to it.

Among the noteworthy points in the present admirable paper is a discussion of the relationship of *Brachyrhamphus craveri* and *B. hypoleucus*, Mr. Brewster reaching the conclusion that the doubts that have been expressed as to their specific distinctness are without foundation. The conclusion is also reached, after the comparison of a large amount of material, that *Buteo borealis lucasanus* is not separable from *B. b. calurus*. Specimens from the Cape St. Lucas region are slightly smaller than more northern examples of *calurus*, as would be expected, but "so far as color and markings are concerned they cannot be separated from *calurus*." *Melanerpes formicivorus angustifrons* is considered as "specifically" distinct "from its nearest allies," but no reasons for this opinion are here stated. The Cape form of *Myiarchus cinerascens* is believed to be worthy of subspecific recognition, under the name *pertinax* applied to it by Baird in 1859, but it has not of late been considered as separable from *cinerascens*. On the other hand, Mr. Brewster finds that the characters ascribed to *Sayornis nigricans semiatra*, as distinguished from *nigricans*, are "too trifling and inconstant to deserve anything more than passing notice." He agrees with Mr. Ridgway that the so-called *Astragalinus psaltria arizonæ* is "scarcely a definite form." *Ammodramus halophilus* is considered as not separable from *A. rostratus guttatus*, or at least, that it is premature to give it recognition till we know more about it. *Tiroo gilvus swainsoni* is believed to be "a good subspecies." The case of *Hylocichla guttata nana* (Aud.) is discussed at length, and the reasons fully given for the revival of the name *nana* for the small Hermit Thrush of the Pacific coast region.

The 'Cape Region' of Lower California has long been of special interest,

owing to its geographical position and peculiar physical characteristics, and Mr. Brewster's detailed and painstaking analysis of its bird life is a most welcome addition not only to the literature of ornithology but to geographical zoölogy.—J. A. A.

Henshaw's 'Birds of the Hawaiian Islands.'¹—The author modestly says: "There being at present no popular work upon Hawaiian birds, the present little volume has been prepared with the view of breaking ground in this department, and with the hope that it may prove of assistance to those who are already bird-lovers and, as well, may stimulate others to become such." While thus avowedly popular in character, it is much out of the line of ordinary popular bird books, inasmuch as it deals with questions outside of the usual range of such works. Nearly the first quarter of the book is devoted to such general subjects as the origin of the Hawaiian avifauna, its peculiar environmental conditions, environmental changes disastrous to Hawaiian birds, the diseases of Hawaiian birds, the ornithological knowledge of the natives, the history of ornithological investigations in the islands, faunal zones, etc. This is followed by 'Part II. Descriptive,' which gives a very full biographical account of each species, and a description of its external characters. Following this is a table showing the geographical distribution of the native species by islands, and an index.

The number of species treated is 125, "including residents, migrants and strays, together with a few that are extinct or practically so." Eleven species have been introduced into one or more of the islands and have become more or less firmly established. "There are 60 species of woodland Passeres that are endemic and are peculiar to the islands, these being distinctively *the* Hawaiian Birds."

Notwithstanding the fact that in recent years so much has been done to make known scientifically the birds of the Hawaiian Islands, through the great works of Mr. Scott B. Wilson and Mr. Walter Rothschild, and the lesser writings of other investigators, we have here for the first time an attempt to place within the reach of the ordinary bird lover a descriptive list combined with a full account of what is known of their life histories, based largely on the original observations of the author.

"With the exception of a few species," says Mr. Henshaw, "that are evidently comparatively recent comers from America, like the Night Heron, Gallinule, Marsh Hawk, and the Short-eared Owl, Hawaiian birds are quite unlike any others. They fall naturally into a few groups of related species, and so different are they from the birds of other lands that their relationships are traceable only with great difficulty." Accord-

¹Birds of the Hawaiian Islands | being a | Complete List | of the | Birds of the Hawaiian Possessions | with Notes on their Habits | By | H. W. Henshaw | — Price \$1.00 | — | Honolulu, H. I. | Thos. G. Thrum, Publisher. | 1902 — Svo, pp. 146.